



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**PERCEIVED PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP STYLE AND JOB
SATISFACTION AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS:
A CASE STUDY**

VASANTA KUMARI RAMAN

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**MASTER OF SCIENCE
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By

VASANTA KUMARI RAMAN

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ABSTRACT

Abstract of project presented to the Faculty of Educational Studies,
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PERCEIVED PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP STYLE AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG THE SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: A CASE STUDY

By

FEBRUARY 1999

Supervisor : Associate Professor Dr. Zaidatul Akmaliah Lope Pihie

Faculty: Educational Studies

The aim of the study was to determine the principal leadership style of principals that relate to job satisfaction level among teachers in the district of Hulu Langat. Four secondary schools from the district of Hulu Langat were involved in this study. Respondents consisted of two hundred teachers from the four schools. A modified version of the Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) which was taken from Hemphill and Coons (1957) was used. The questionnaire was divided into three parts. Part one of the questionnaire determined the biodata of the respondents. Part two of the questionnaire dealt with questions relating to leadership style of the principal and part three consisted of questions relating to job satisfaction

level of teachers. The data collected were analysed using SPSS programme (Statistical Package for Social Science). Percentage, mean, standard deviation and Pearson test was obtained. The study showed that, there was a high mean of 3.5 and 3.4 for two of the schools for job satisfaction under the administration of the perceived democratic leadership style of the principal. A low mean of 1.63 and 1.7 for job satisfaction was observed for the two schools which were under the perceived autocratic leadership style of the principal. Furthermore, there was a significant and strong correlation of $r=.78$ and $r=.75$ at .05 alpha level between the perceived democratic leadership style and job satisfaction. A weak correlation of $r=.30$ and $r=.35$ significant at alpha level .05 was shown between the perceived autocratic leadership style and job satisfaction. The study supports C.C. Wall's (1970) view that a less autocratic leadership style is favoured by teachers. It also further supports Punch's (1996) opinion that teachers experience a higher job satisfaction under democratic principal leadership style.

ABSTRAK

Abstrak projek yang dikemukakan kepada Fakulti Pengajian Pendidikan,
Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi sebahagian syarat
bagi mendapatkan Ijazah Master Sains

PERSEPSI STAIL KEPIMPINAN PENGETUA DAN KEPUASAN KERJA DI KALANGAN GURU-GURU SEKOLAH MENENGAH : SATU KAJIAN KES

Oleh

FEBRUARI 1999

Penyelia: Prof. Madya Dr. Zaidatul Akmaliah Lope Pihie

Fakulti: Pengajian Pendidikan

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengenal pasti stail kepimpinan pengetua dan hubungannya dengan kepuasan kerja guru di daerah Hulu Langat. Empat buah sekolah menengah di daerah Hulu Langat telah dipilih untuk kajian ini. Responden kajian ini terdiri daripada dua ratus guru dari sekolah-sekolah tersebut. Kajian ini dijalankan melalui soal selidik yang diubahsuai dari Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) Hemphill and Coons (1957). Soal selidik ini dibahagikan kepada tiga bahagian. Bahagian pertama merangkumi soalan berkenaan dengan biodata responden. Bahagian kedua adalah berkenaan dengan stail kepimpinan pengetua dan bahagian ketiga adalah berkenaan soalan kepuasan kerja guru. Data yang

diperolehi di analisis melalui program SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) untuk mendapatkan peratus, min, sisihan piawai dan hasil ujian korelasi Pearson. Keputusan kajian menunjukkan bahawa min bagi kepuasan kerja guru-guru di bawah persepsi stail kepimpinan demokratik adalah tinggi bagi dua buah sekolah iaitu 3.5 dan 3.4 dan min bagi kepuasan kerja guru-guru di bawah persepsi stail kepimpinan autokratik adalah rendah bagi dua buah sekolah lagi iaitu 1.63 dan 1.7. Menurut analisis terdapat hubungan korelasi yang tinggi dan signifikan antara stail kepimpinan demokratik mengikut persepsi guru dengan kepuasan kerja guru, nilai $r=.78$ dan $r=.75$ pada tahap alpha .05. Didapati juga hubungan korelasi yang rendah antara stail kepimpinan autokratik mengikut persepsi guru dengan kepuasan kerja guru, nilai $r=.30$ dan $r=.35$ pada tahap alpha .05. Kajian ini menyokong pendapat C.C. Wall (1970) bahawa guru-guru lebih menyukai stail kepimpinan yang kurang autokratif. Kajian ini juga menyokong pendapat Punch (1996) bahawa guru-guru menikmati kepuasan kerja yang lebih tinggi di bawah stail kepimpinan demokratik.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background of Study

Leadership style and the capabilities of school principals influence the school administration and the organizational climate of a school. The principal acts as a professional who deals with not only the administrative part but more often he also plans, carries out, supervises evaluates and coaches his subordinates. The principal does more to influence the quality of the school programme than any other person. Apart from this, the teaching-learning process is greatly influenced by the principal leadership style. Principals play an important role, are influential and hold responsibilities in the everyday affair of a school.

Principals are pivots in which they act as variables that decide the success or failure of an education system as well as to influence job satisfaction among teachers in schools. It cannot be denied that in assessing a school, the academic achievement of students of that school and its staff's job satisfaction are two main criteria used as a yard stick. The competency of the school principal is of critical concern and interest in the school system. This is due to the belief that the competence of the school principal

has a strong influence on the effectiveness of the smooth running of the school whereby teachers are the instruments who ensure that the smooth governing takes place (Grunberg, 1979).

Being a school principal is not easy. The principal holds position of high visibility functioning within a system. The principal is bound by general policies laid down by the central administration which in Malaysia is the Ministry of Education through the State's Department of Education. At the same time the principal must meet the personal and professional needs of the teachers. The principal is in a position in which he both directs and is directed by the context within which he works. He is faced by pressures from the central office, teachers, parents and the community as a whole. Since the administration of the school penetrates every phase of school life, the principal's actions have the potential to "support, enhance and develop" or to discourage, disrupt and confuse any or all parts of a school organisation.

Hussein (1993) is of the view that principals are important agent who decide the academic achievement of schools and the progress the school attains in general. The Jemaah Nazir Sekolah Persekutuan, Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (1993) echoes a similar opinion and further adds that principal leadership style affects staff satisfaction and in turn affects the quality of job output among teachers. Therefore, in order to produce quality output among teachers, they (teachers) in the first place need to have job satisfaction. This again falls backs on the type of leadership style portrayed by the principal.

Hence, principal leadership style greatly influences job satisfaction among teachers who in turn do play a role in the academic achievement of the students. For this chain of reaction to be successful, Roe and Drake (1980) state that principal leadership style be held responsible for creating a conducive environment for teachers to perform their task. This according to Roe and Drake, will help to produce better work quality.

On the other hand, it can be observed that in some schools the teachers are far more satisfied with their jobs as compared to teachers in other schools. Why does this situation prevail? Does this mean that the principals with teachers who experience low job satisfaction have failed in their duties? How can this situation arise when the Ministry of Education of Malaysia provides training grounds for the selected principals in areas such as leadership, supervision and administration.

According to Rothstein (1989) leadership is considered as a way of influencing others through communication and how this in turn can improve the morale of teachers. Can this explanation alone explain why some teachers find better job satisfaction than others? Perhaps, in today's school environment this is not sufficient. It cannot be concluded that there is only one best way for principal leadership style but it should be noted that with the present day pressure put on schoolheads by the different quarters of the society being a principal needs one to practice new ways of speaking and listening which allows persons to openly discuss their suppressed and negative thoughts (Rothstein, 1989). With this understanding portrayed by the

principals, teachers can function better in school. A more meaningful relationship should be adopted by school principal leadership style and teachers to grapple with their mutual problems.

The role of principals in Malaysia today is different from that of the principals during the British colonial periods or even rather during the 80's. The principal in the 90's works in a highly competitive society facing continuous political changes, social problems and take up the challenges development brings about in the education field. Kamaruddin (1989) is of the view that the school is built, maintained and developed for the society, by the society and belongs to the society. Teachers are the backbone of this organisation. In this respect, the principal plays a key role in the development and progress of the school.

Kamaruddin (1989) further points out that the principal of the school in Malaysia is not only regarded as an administrator but also as a leader, especially in the rural area. Being the chief administrator of his school, he is responsible for the formulation of the objectives of his school in line with the objectives of the national educational system, the national integrative objective and aspirations of the multi-racial society. As such, it cannot be denied that a good leadership style is of great importance in shouldering this heavy responsibility.

Statement of the Problem

The smooth governing of a school depends highly on the principal leadership style (Fletcher, C. and Williams, R 1992). This is also a view shared by Nor Azizan (1994). It is further stated that job satisfaction among teachers relies strongly by the leadership style portrayed by the school principals. The leadership process is a way of learning about and using information so that principals and teachers become more aware and more effective in their schoolwork. This would definitely ensure security in their psychological sense of well-being. Hence, the job satisfaction that was searched for would be fulfilled.

Bearing this in mind, the focus on leadership style of principals is ultimatum in deciding teachers performance which is affected by their job satisfaction. The Education Ministry holds courses and seminars for school principals to pick up traits in administration and leadership styles. These courses are intended to guide and coach principals in administration of schools including staff development. Despite this, why do we so often hear grouses of job dissatisfaction among teachers from the newspaper. The pressure the society lays on the teachers requiring them to be more than just knowledge transmitters further adds fuel to fire. Today parents expect teachers to take on numerous roles as advisor, counselor, disciplinarian, an information giver, a motivator and referer (New Straits Times, Sept, 1998). This is a tall order for a teacher whose main purpose is to transmit knowledge.

As such, if the principal's leadership style does not help teachers to cope and assume the different tasks required by the expected different roles or teachers has to play in school, then the strain of the circumstances would affect their job satisfaction. Once the sense of dissatisfaction creeps into the heart of the teachers, it is difficult to revive the spirit and enthusiasm of those teachers concerned. It takes much skill and diplomacy on the part of the principal to restore them to the normal working spirit. It is essential for principals to possess abilities superior to those of their staff not only to gain their respect but also to be a source of guidance and help and pool the co-operation of the teachers for the best of the school. In administering a school, the principal must be able to form an integrated staff team with good human relationship, co-operation, initiative, dedication, commitment, sense of responsibility and motivation. This is especially so with teachers who are expected to play the various roles which add to their burden. These qualities are some of the internal factors which affect the activities of the school.

With this scenario existing in the present day school, the researcher hopes to identify the principal leadership style that would bring about job satisfaction among secondary school teachers for it is imperative that a principal should possess qualities of leadership, academic excellence, creativity, vision and administrative skills to create job satisfaction among teachers which would lead to enhanced productivity.

Objectives

The objectives of this study is:

- i) To identify the principal leadership style in the selected schools.
- ii) To identify job satisfaction among secondary school teachers pertaining to principal leadership style.

It is hoped that this research would provide answers to the following research questions.

- 1. What is the leadership style of the principals of the selected schools?
- 2. How satisfied are the secondary school teachers in their job?
- 3. Is there a relationship between principal leadership style and job satisfaction among the secondary school teachers in the selected schools?

Significance of the Study

This research on principal leadership and job satisfaction among teachers is hoped to enlighten the Education Ministry the effectiveness of the courses held for principals. Apart from this, the research done is hoped to create greater awareness for a better course outline for the principals in regards to administration and leadership in the near future. With more effective courses carried out to groom and mould successful leaders for the school, it is hoped that principals would portray leadership styles most suitable to suit the needs and wants of their individual schools. There is no

one best style of leadership therefore it is necessary for the principals to realize the different leadership style required of them for the proper functioning of the school as well as to maintain good human relationship with teachers to maintain good working order in school.

Furthermore, it is hoped to bring deeper understanding about teachers job satisfaction in school in relation to principal leadership style. The mixed roles played by teachers in school add an extra burden to their mainstream vocation of teaching. Having to work under heavy responsibilities it is hoped that this research would highlight the job satisfaction level of teachers.

Finally, all in all, the study then is significant because it will reveal the leadership style of principals, job satisfaction among secondary school teachers and creates a clearer awareness of course outline for better principal leadership which leads to effective running of the school and healthy relationship with the teachers.

This research can also be useful as a reference for future researchers who intend to investigate on leadership style. Through this research it is hoped that an idea can be mooted as to which leadership theories can be applied for job satisfaction.

Limitation

This research has limitations in the areas mentioned below:

- a) This research is done on four selected secondary schools only, therefore the results of this research cannot be generalized to all secondary schools in Malaysia.
- b) Teacher job satisfaction data were only for a single calendar year and may not be typical of all years.
- c) The data collected were dependent on the sincerity and voluntary participation of teachers to answer the questionnaire.

Definition

Leadership

Leadership according to Sergiovanni (1984) is defined as when a leader controls the group's movement to regulate status, defend the group and maintain its integrity. Bogardus (1918) is of the view that leadership comprises quality traits and skills which influence the subordinates to work in order to achieve the objectives of the organization.

Job Satisfaction

Performance of a job that leads to rewards brings about job satisfaction (Porter and Lawler, 1964). A feeling derived in completing a task assigned in regards to an individual's need. When the need of an individual is fulfilled in carrying out a task then job satisfaction is obtained (Vroom, 1964).

“clean examples have a curious method of multiplying themselves”

(Mahatma Ghandhi)

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

The Ministry of Education has called upon the implementation of high technological education system in schools to be on par with today's competitive education system. Hence, many Smart Schools (Sekolah Bestari) have begun to take shape. In order for this vision to materialize the manpower of teachers is needed. If teachers cannot find job satisfaction then the efforts taken by the Ministry of Education to promote Information Technology in schools would remain only on paper.

Surveys of job satisfaction from the 1920's illustrate the importance of leadership. They uniformly reported that employees favourable attitudes toward their supervisors contributed to the employees' satisfaction. In turn, employees favourable attitudes toward their supervisors were usually found to be related to the productivity of the work group (Bass, 1990).

Therefore, it is necessary for a dynamic leadership style among school principals to improve the morale of teachers and to ensure the success of the vision set by the Ministry of Education.

Concept of Leadership

The word leadership is a sophisticated, modern concept. Pfeffer (1986) noted, many of the definitions are ambiguous. The many dimensions into which leadership has been cast and their overlapping meanings have caused confusion. Leadership has been conceived.

“ as the focus of group processes, ... as a matter of inducing compliance, as the exercise of influence, a particular behaviour, as a form of persuasion and as an instrument to achieve goals”.

(Bass 1990)

Cooley (1902) is of the view that the leader is always the nucleus of a tendency and all social movements, when closely examined will be found to consist of tendencies having such nuclei. The central importance given to the leader goes to show the important role a leader plays in an organisation. On the other hand, Chapin (1924) viewed leadership as a point of polarization for group cooperation. Denhardt, (1987) contends that myths and symbols surround leadership and that the master-slave relationship as perceived in leadership style may unconsciously influence superior-subordinate relationships.